

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-9 are pending in the application. Claims 3-9 have been amended. Claim 2 has been canceled. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications.

Applicant notes with appreciation Examiner's acknowledgement that previously pending claim 1 contains allowable subject matter. Claims 3-9 depend from allowable claim 1.

Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 5-8 have been amended to correct antecedent basis. Claims 5-8 depend from claim 1 and are therefore in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Datta in combination with JP 2000-144438 (JP '438) and Applicants' alleged prior art (specification, page 18, lines 2-19). Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 3 and 4, as amended, depend from claim 1, and should be allowable along with claim 1 and for other reasons.

Claims 5-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Datta in combination with JP 2000-144438 (JP '438), Applicants' alleged prior art (specification, page 18, lines 2-19) and further in view of JP 07-268638 (JP '638). Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 5-6, as amended, depend from claim 1, and should be allowable along with claim 1 and for other reasons.

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Datta in combination with JP 2000-144438 (JP '438), Applicants' alleged prior art (specification, page 18, lines 2-19) and further in view of JP 07-268638 (JP '638). Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 7 and 8, as

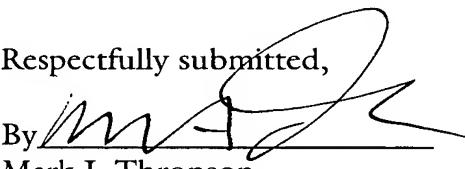
amended, depend from claim 1, and should be allowable along with claim 1 and for other reasons.

Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being patentable over Datta in combination with JP '438 and Applicants' admitted prior art (specification, page 18, lines 2-19) as applied to claims 2-4. Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claim 9, as amended, depends from claim 1, and should be allowable along with claim 1 and for other reasons.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Dated: April 15, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Mark J. Thronson

Registration No.: 33,082
DICKSTEIN SHAPIRO MORIN &
OSHINSKY LLP
2101 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20037-1526
(202) 785-9700
Attorney for Applicant